United Nations E/CN.6/1998/1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 December 1997

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Forty-second session
2-13 March 1998
Item 2 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women:
   (a) Review of mainstreaming in organizations of the United Nations system;
   (b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men;
   (c) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern.
4. Communications concerning the status of women.
5. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including the elaboration of a draft optional protocol to the Convention.
6. Provisional agenda for the forty-third session of the Commission.
7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its forty-second session.

Annotations

1. Election of officers

Rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council provides that, at the commencement of the first meeting of a regular session, the Commission shall elect, from among the representatives of its members, a Chairperson, one or more Vice-Chairpersons and such other officers as may be required. At past sessions, the Commission has elected, in addition to a Chairperson, three Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur.

97-37345 (E) 090198 140198

In resolution 1987/21, the Economic and Social Council recommended that, in order to enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Commission, the officers elected to the Bureau of the Commission should serve for a term of office of two years. The Commission will be required to elect a new Bureau at the present session. The officers elected will serve during the forty-second and forty-third sessions.

The membership of the Commission in 1998 is given in annex II below.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 7 of the rules of procedure provides that the Commission shall, at the beginning of each session, after the election of its officers, adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda.

The provisional agenda and documentation for the forty-second session of the Commission were approved by the Economic and Social Council in decision 1997/229. In resolution 1996/6 on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Economic and Social Council adopted a multi-year work programme for the Commission for a focused and thematic approach, culminating in a quinquennial review and appraisal of the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women. In the same resolution, the Council decided that the work of the Commission in relation to the work programme should be closely related to the relevant provisions of the Platform for Action, with a view to ensuring the effective implementation of the Platform for Action, and also decided on the items to be included in the Commission's agenda.

The Commission, in its agreed conclusions 1996/1 on methods of work for dealing with the implementation of the Platform for Action, noted that its innovative methods of work had to be understood as a process that included not only the sessions of the Commission, but also the organization of work. Broad-based participation in the preparatory process for each session of the Commission was to be encouraged, and the practice of periodically convening meetings of the Bureau of the Commission open to the participation of all interested States was to be encouraged and consolidated.

Accordingly, on 5 May, 27 August and 13 October 1997, the Bureau of the Commission met to consider the organization and methods of work for the session and convened informal consultations in accordance with agreed conclusions 1996/1 of the Commission. Following past practice, the Bureau confirmed that there would be three sets of consultations in preparation for the forty-second session of the Commission. The first consultation was held on 1 October 1997. The second consultation, focusing on the work of the open-ended in-session working group of the Commission on the elaboration of an optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, was held on 29 October 1997. The third consultation is expected to be convened in mid-February 1998.

The proposed organization of the work of the session, as contained in annex I below, reflects the agreements reached during the consultations in October. The Commission will be informed orally by the Secretariat of any changes that may emerge from the consultations in mid-February.

During the consultations, it was agreed that there should be a general debate focusing on sub-item 3 (c) (Implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern). In particular, Member States would be encouraged to refer to their national action plans for follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The sequencing of the general debate would allow Member States, if they wished, to comment also on the critical areas of concern and on topics for future emerging issues.

To ensure wide participation, it was agreed that individual interventions by Governments, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations should be limited to five minutes, and interventions on behalf of groups should be limited to 10 minutes.

In section III of resolution 1996/6, the Economic and Social Council requested that all United Nations documentation be kept concise, clear, analytical and timely, with a focus on relevant issues and in accordance with Council resolution 1987/24 and its agreed conclusions 1995/1, approved by the Council on 28 July 1995; that reports contain recommendations for action and indicate the actors; that reports be issued in all official languages, in accordance with the rules of the United Nations; and that other methods of reporting, such as oral reports, also be explored. In the same resolution, the Council specified the reports to be prepared under item 3 of the Commission's agenda, bearing in mind the need to promote integrated reporting.

The Commission will have before it a note by the Secretariat on the status of documentation for the session.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the status of documentation for the session (E/CN.6/1998/L.1)

3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women

(a) Review of mainstreaming in organizations of the United Nations system

In section III of resolution 1996/6, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare annually under item 3 a report on the measures taken and the progress achieved in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system. In the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/51/322), it was noted that reports requested under Assembly resolution 50/203 would be provided to the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on a rolling basis. In each of these reports, the Secretary-General, while briefly summarizing results of previous sessions of the other bodies, would add new material. The request for annual reports on follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was reiterated in Assembly resolutions 51/69 and 52/100.

The Commission will have before it the report requested.

In section I of resolution 1996/6, the Council decided that the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality should inform the Commission of the progress of its work, for the purpose of system-wide coordination, and that a gender perspective should also be fully integrated in the work of all thematic task forces on Conference follow-up established by the Administrative Committee on Coordination. In fulfilment of that request, the Commission will hear an oral report by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and Chairperson of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality.

High-level plenary review

In resolution 52/100, the General Assembly decided to convene, in the year 2000, a high-level plenary review to appraise and assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the Beijing Platform for Action five years after its adoption, and to consider further actions and

initiatives; the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, with a view to ensuring participation at a high political level, to explore in a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session the possibility, among other options, of convening the review (a) at the start of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, (b) within the framework of the proposed millennium Assembly, if agreed upon by the General Assembly, (c) following the annual session of Commission on the Status of Women, or (d) as a special session of the General Assembly. In the same resolution, the Assembly decided that the Commission on the Status of Women should serve as the preparatory committee for the high-level review, and as such would be open to the participation of all States Members of the United Nations, members of specialized agencies and observers, in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly, and invited the Commission to take appropriate action towards that end, including giving attention to appropriate arrangements for the involvement and participation of non-governmental organizations in the review. The Assembly requested the Commission to consider at its forty-second session the report of the Secretary-General requested above, thus enabling the Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, to decide on this issue at its fifty-second session as soon as possible thereafter.

The Commission will have before it the report requested.

Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, including mainstreaming women's human rights

In resolution 41/6, the Commission addressed the need to mainstream a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. It encouraged the Economic and Social Council to develop specific recommendations in that regard, and highlighted the need for gender mainstreaming, *inter alia*, at the inter-agency level, in the coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, and in the ongoing restructuring process of the Secretariat. It also requested Governments to include information on progress in mainstreaming when submitting their reports on national action plans for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

In resolution 39/5, the Commission requested the Secretary-General, taking into account the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to see to the preparation of a joint work plan on the human rights of women for the Centre for Human Rights and the Division for the Advancement of Women on an annual basis and to inform both the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women at their annual sessions, beginning in 1995, of the plans. In resolution 40/3, the Commission stressed the need to intensify efforts of cooperation and coordination to ensure that the equal status and the human rights of all women and the girl child were integrated into the mainstream of United Nations system-wide activities and were addressed regularly and systematically in relevant United Nations bodies and mechanisms. In resolution 41/6, the Commission, *inter alia*, urged that the joint work plan of the Division and of the Centre for Human Rights be fully considered by the Commission on Human Rights; and that due consideration be given to the human rights of women and the girl child in the preparations for the five-year review of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Bearing in mind the need to promote integrated reporting, the joint work plan will be incorporated into the report of the Secretary-General submitted under sub-item 3 (a). Implementation of resolution 41/6 will be integrated into the reports submitted under sub-items 3 (a) and 3 (c).

Palestinian women

In resolution 1997/16 on Palestinian women, the Economic and Social Council requested the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to monitor and take action with regard to the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children, and the Beijing Platform for Action; it requested the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation and to assist Palestinian women by all available means, and to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution. Bearing in mind the need to promote integrated reporting, the report of the Secretary-General on this question will be incorporated into the report of the Secretary-General submitted under sub-item 3 (a).

Release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts, including those subsequently imprisoned

In resolution 41/1, the Commission requested the Secretary-General and all relevant international organizations to use their capabilities and efforts to facilitate the release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts, including those subsequently imprisoned, and to report to the Commission at its forty-second session on the implementation of the resolution, taking into account the information provided by States and relevant international organizations. Bearing in mind the need to promote integrated reporting, the report of the Secretary-General on this question will be incorporated into the report of the Secretary-General submitted under sub-item 3 (a).

Mid-term review of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001

The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1996/34, endorsed the revised system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001, taking into account the comments of the Commission on the Status of Women contained in Commission resolution 40/10 and the annex thereto, and the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, and requested all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to implement the revised plan in light of those comments. The Council decided to undertake, in 1998, a comprehensive mid-term review of the implementation of the revised plan as a basis for future programming and coordination of activities for the advancement and empowerment of women by the United Nations system, including a review of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective. It requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Council, through the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session, a progress report on the implementation of the revised plan. In resolution 41/6, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to give due attention to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, including mainstreaming, in the context of the review of the revised plan in 1998.

The Commission will have before it the report requested.

Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat

The General Assembly, in resolution 52/96 on improvement of the status of women in the secretariat, called upon the Secretary-General, to implement fully and monitor the strategic plan of action for the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (1995-2000) in order to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution by the year 2000; to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys; to ensure accountability of individual

managers for implementing the strategic plan within their areas of responsibility; to continue work to create a gender-sensitive work environment; and to enable the Focal Point for Women effectively to monitor and facilitate progress in the implementation of the strategic plan. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include in his report on the implementation of the resolution statistics on the number and percentage of women in all organizational units and at all levels throughout the United Nations system.

The Commission will have before it the report requested.

Violence against women

In resolution 50/166 on the role of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in eliminating violence against women, the General Assembly requested the Fund to include in its regular reports information regarding its activities to eliminate violence against women and to provide such information to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights. It also requested the Fund to include in its regular reports information on the establishment of a trust fund in support of national, regional and international actions to eliminate violence against women and to provide such information to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights. The Commission will be provided with such information.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

In accordance with article 21.2 of the Convention, the reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women are transmitted to the Commission for its information. The report of the Committee on its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions (A/52/38/Rev.1) and a note transmitting the results of the Committee's eighteenth session (19 January to 6 February 1998) will be before the Commission for its information.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on follow-up to and implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (E/CN.6/1998/2)

Report of the Secretary-General on a mid-term review of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 (E/CN.6/1998/3)

Report of the Secretary-General on progress in improving the status of women in the Secretariat (E/CN.6/1998/8)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting information provided by the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/166 (E/CN.6/1998/9)

Report of the Secretary-General containing options for a high-level plenary review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the year 2000 (E/CN.6/1998/10)

Documentation for information

Report of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions (A/52/38/Rev.1)

Note by the Secretariat transmitting the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, as mandated by the Economic and Social Council in its agreed conclusions 1997/1, paragraph 29 (A/52/300)

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as mandated in General Assembly resolution 49/164 (A/52/337)

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, as mandated by the Economic and Social Council in its agreed conclusions 1997/1, paragraph 29 (A/52/352)

Report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/52/408)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the results of the eighteenth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (E/CN.6/1998/CRP.1)

(b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men

In its resolution 1996/6, the Council elaborated the Commission's terms of reference and, *inter alia*, decided that the Commission should identify emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men that required urgent consideration, and make substantive recommendations thereon; decided that the Commission's agenda would include annually a sub-item 3 (b) on emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men; and requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on emerging issues under that sub-item, as appropriate, at the request of the Commission or its Bureau. The Commission also noted, bearing in mind the role of the Economic and Social Council in overall coordination, that increased dialogue between the Bureaux of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council and the chairpersons and secretariats, as appropriate, of the other functional commissions, other subsidiary bodies and related bodies, including the relevant executive boards, would assist in identifying issues that could be addressed under the agenda item on emerging issues and trends.

The Commission, in resolution 41/2 on older women, human rights and development, decided to consider, at its forty-second session under the sub-item entitled "Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men", the status of older women and to make substantive recommendations thereon. The Commission will have before it a report on this issue, including the results on an expert group meeting on gender and caregiving.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of older women (E/CN.6/1998/4)

(c) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern

In resolution 51/69, the General Assembly welcomed Council resolution 1996/6, in which the Council strengthened the mandate and terms of reference of the Commission on the Status of Women and endorsed the Commission's multi-year work programme for the period 1996-2000. The Assembly also welcomed the Commission's agreed conclusions 1996/1 on the Commission's methods of work for dealing with the implementation of the Platform for Action. The Council, in resolution 1996/6, decided on a timetable for considering the Platform's 12 critical areas of concern, in the light of the need for a focused and thematic multi-year work programme on those areas and bearing in mind that the critical areas of concern are interrelated and interdependent. Accordingly, the Commission will review the following four critical areas of concern in 1998: violence against women (Platform for

Action, chap. IV.D); women and armed conflict (Platform for Action, chap. IV.E); human rights of women (Platform for Action, chap. IV.I) and the girl child (Platform for Action, chap. IV.L).

In section III of resolution 1996/6, the Economic and Social Council decided that the Commission would consider, in 1998, under item 3 of its agenda, a synthesized report on implementation plans of Governments and the United Nations system, based, *inter alia*, on national action plans and any other sources of information already available in the United Nations system.

In its agreed conclusions 1996/1, the Commission established the basis for the organization of work at its subsequent sessions. As stated in the agreed conclusions, the Commission considered that its effectiveness and efficiency could be improved through innovative methods of work, including inviting experts to participate in the substantive debate on selected issues as part of the regular work of the Commission. The practice of inviting experts was expected to deal effectively with the critical areas of concern established in the Platform for Action and to contribute to the effective follow-up to the Conference. The experts should be chosen from the fields of study addressed under the critical areas of concern, taking into account equitable geographical distribution and the involvement of non-governmental organizations. Panels of experts should be formed. They should include experts appointed by the Secretary-General, experts working within the United Nations system, and experts from Governments and from civil society. The selection of experts, the composition of the panels, and the allocation of time to dialogues should be decided inter-sessionally by the Bureau of the Commission, taking into consideration the proposals of the United Nations Secretariat. The Secretariat should prepare a list of candidates for the panels based on suggestions from States and civil society. The Bureau should convene meetings open to the participation of all interested States to ensure a broad base of participation. Meetings should be allotted for dialogue with organizations within the United Nations system and civil society and among governmental delegations. Sufficient time should be devoted to intergovernmental dialogue.

In accordance with the agreed conclusions, the results of the dialogues should normally be reflected in concise, action-oriented agreed conclusions to be transmitted to the Economic and Social Council by a Commission decision. They should also contain policy recommendations and identify coordination issues to be dealt with by the Council.

As agreed at the Commission's fortieth session, the Bureau of the Commission convened consultations as noted above. In compliance with agreed conclusions 1996/1 of the Commission, and at the request of the Bureau, the Secretariat prepared non-papers covering preparations for and procedures to be followed at the forty-second session of the Commission.

During the consultations, it was agreed that there should be four panels, one on each of the critical areas of concern. One meeting would be allocated to each of the four critical areas of concern, allowing for a panel discussion and dialogue with the panel of experts and among Member States and observers. Panellists would be instructed to keep their presentations to seven to ten minutes each and to make their written statements available in advance.

The consultations emphasized the need to ensure that experts in the panels made their presentations on the basis of their experience with the issue, rather than on the basis of official positions of their organizations or Governments. It was agreed that each panel should have four experts. In making its proposals concerning the composition of the panels, the Secretariat was guided by the parameters established in agreed conclusions 1996/1 of the Commission. The need to ensure a mix of relevant experience on implementation of the

Platform for Action and the need for geographical balance guided the final selection of panellists by the Bureau. Governments were invited to submit by 31 October 1997, nominations for experts who might be considered for the panels, indicating on which of the four panels the nominee might serve.

In resolution 41/4 on violence against women migrant workers, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to take into account and to reflect in his thematic report to the Commission at its forty-second session the various major findings and recommendations from all reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly on the issue of violence against women migrant workers, in order for the Commission to make recommendations on the issue. In resolution 52/97, the General Assembly invited the Commission to address the issue of violence against women migrant workers at its forty-second session when considering violence against women and/or human rights of women.

In its resolution 41/5 on traffic in women and girls, the Commission decided to examine, at its forty-second session, the reports of the special rapporteurs and relevant organizations and bodies, with a view to making appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1998. In resolution 52/98, the Assembly invited the Commission, at its next session, to address the subject of the traffic in women and girls when considering violence against women and human rights of women.

In resolution 52/99, the Assembly welcomed the fact that the Commission on the Status of Women would address the critical areas of concern "violence against women", "the girl child" and "human rights of women" at its session in 1998 and "women and health" in 1999. It invited the Commission to address the issue of harmful traditional or customary practices during those sessions, and requested the Secretary-General to make available to the Commission on Human Rights, at its fifty-fourth session, in 1998, the outcome of the discussions in the Commission on the Status of Women on that issue, if necessary in the form of an oral report.

In resolution 41/6 the Commission requested that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, relevant special rapporteurs and treaty body experts be invited to participate in the discussion on the critical areas of concern "human rights of women" and "the girl child", to be held at the forty-second session of the Commission.

In following up agreed conclusions 1996/1 of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission, at its forty-first session, agreed to include in its report to the Council a text submitted by the Chairperson, in which it was noted that the Commission on the Status of Women would undertake in 1998 an overall review of the theme "human rights of women", and that the Commission on Human Rights should consider providing, in accordance with paragraph 45 of agreed conclusions 1996/1, an input to the Commission on the Status of Women on ensuring women's real enjoyment of their human rights, in particular those relating to the alleviation of women's poverty, economic development and economic resources; with a view to facilitating interaction between the two Commissions, the Secretariat was invited to submit a report on this subject to both the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights, in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat (see E/1997/27, chap. II, para. 178). In resolution 1997/11, the Commission on Human Rights requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-fourth session, in accordance with agreed conclusions 1996/1 of the Economic and Social Council, a report, to be prepared by the Centre for Human Rights and the Division for the Advancement of Women, on the obstacles

encountered and progress achieved in the field of women's rights relating to economic resources, the elimination of poverty and economic development, in particular for women living in extreme poverty.

(i) Violence against women

Critical area of concern D of the Platform for Action deals with violence against women. The Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General on the thematic issues to be addressed at its forty-second session, including recommendations drawn from studies carried out on a regional basis on measures taken to prevent violence against women.

(ii) Women and armed conflict

Critical area of concern E of the Platform for Action deals with women and armed conflict. The Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General on the thematic issues to be addressed at its forty-second session, including conclusions and recommendations emanating from the expert group meeting on gender-based persecution.

(iii) Human rights of women

Critical area of concern I of the Platform for Action deals with the human rights of women. In resolution 41/2, the Commission decided that at its forty-second session, in examining the critical area of concern "human rights of women" it would also pay attention to the violation of older women's rights. The Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General on the thematic issues to be addressed at its forty-second session, including conclusions and recommendations emanating from the expert group meeting on promoting women's enjoyment of their economic and social rights.

(iv) The girl child

Critical area of concern L of the Platform for Action deals with the girl child. The Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General on the thematic issues to be addressed at its forty-second session, including conclusions and recommendations emanating from the expert group meeting on adolescent girls and their rights.

Documentation

Analytical report of the Secretary-General on the thematic issues before the Commission in accordance with the multi-year work programme, including, as far as possible, progress made in national implementation, based on available data and statistics (E/CN.6/1998/5)

Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on implementation plans of Governments based, *inter alia*, on national action plans and any other sources of information already available in the United Nations system (E/CN.6/1998/6)

Joint report of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on women's real enjoyment of their human rights, in particular those relating to economic resources (E/CN.6/1998/11)

Documentation for information

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance (A/52/477 and Add.1)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (A/52/482)

Reports of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women (E/CN.4/1997/47 and Add.1, Add.1/Corr.1 and Add.2-4, and Add.1-4, E/CN.4/1996/53 and Add.1, Add.1/Corr.1 and Add.2, E/CN.4/1995/42)

Preliminary report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during periods of armed conflict (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/26)

Report of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery (1997)

4. Communications concerning the status of women

In resolution 76 (V) of 5 August 1947, the Economic and Social Council established a procedure by which the Commission on the Status of Women would receive and consider communications relating to the status of women. In resolution 304 I (XI) of 14 and 17 July 1950, the Council amended resolution 76 (V) and requested the Secretary-General to compile, before each session of the Commission, a list of confidential and non-confidential communications, containing a brief indication of the substance of each communication.

In resolution 1983/27, the Council reaffirmed the mandate of the Commission to consider confidential and non-confidential communications on the status of women, and authorized the Commission to appoint a working group to consider such communications and prepare a report thereon for the Commission.

In resolution 1993/11, the Economic and Social Council reaffirmed that the Commission on the Status of Women was empowered to make recommendations to the Economic and Social Council on what action should be taken on emerging trends and patterns of discrimination against women revealed by such communications.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the confidential list of communications concerning the status of women (E/CN.6/1998/S.W. Communications List No. 32)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the non-confidential list of communications concerning the status of women (E/CN.6/1998/CR.34)

5. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including the elaboration of a draft optional protocol to the Convention

In resolution 1995/29, the Economic and Social Council decided that the Commission on the Status of Women should establish an in-session open-ended working group to consider an optional protocol to the Convention. It renewed the mandate of the working group in decision 1996/240.

In decision 1997/227, the Economic and Social Council renewed the mandate of the in-session Open-ended Working Group on the Elaboration of a Draft Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, so that it might continue its work, pursuant to Council resolution 1995/29, during the forty-second and forty-third sessions of the Commission, and authorized it to meet in parallel with the Commission. It also decided to invite a representative of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to attend those meetings as a resource person.

The Commission, in its resolution 41/3, requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at its forty-second session an annotated comparison of the draft optional protocol and the proposed amendments thereto with the provisions of existing international human rights instruments, taking into account the report of the Working Group submitted to the Commission at its forty-first session (E/1997/27, annex III). The report requested will be before the Commission.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General containing an annotated comparison of the draft optional protocol and the proposed amendments thereto with the provisions of existing international human rights instruments, taking into account the report of the Working Group submitted to the Commission at its forty-first session (E/CN.6/1998/7)

Documentation for information

Report of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions (A/52/38/Rev.1)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the results of the eighteenth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (E/CN.6/1998/CRP.1)

6. Provisional agenda for the forty-third session of the Commission

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1894 (LVII), and in accordance with paragraph 5 of section III, and paragraphs 3 and 4 of section IV of Council resolution 1996/6, the Commission will have before it the draft provisional agenda for its forty-third session, with an indication of the documents to be submitted under each agenda item and the legislative authority for their preparation, in order to enable the Commission to consider those documents from the point of view of their contribution to the work of the Commission and of their urgency and relevance in the light of the current situation.

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its forty-second session

In accordance with rule 37 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission shall submit to the Council a report on the work of its forty-second session.

Annex I

Proposed organization of work

Week of 2-6 March 1998

Monday, 2 March

a.m.		Opening of the session
	Item 1	Election of officers
	Item 2	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters
	Item 3 (c)	Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: general discussion (national action plans)
p.m.*	*Item 3 (c)*	Continuation of general discussion

Tuesday, 3 March

a.m.*	*Item 3 (c)*	Continuation of general discussion
p.m.*	*Item 3 (c)*	Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern: human rights of women
		Panel of experts: presentation and dialogue

Wednesday, 4 March

a.m.*	*Item 3 (c)*	Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern: the girl child
		Panel of experts: presentation and dialogue
p.m.*	*Item 3 (c)*	Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern: women and armed conflict
		Panel of experts: presentation and dialogue

Thursday, 5 March[a]

a.m.*	*Item 3 (a)*	Review of mainstreaming in organizations of the United Nations system
	Item 3 (b)	Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men

* The meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Elaboration of a Draft Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women will be held simultaneously with the plenary meetings.

[a] A special event to mark International Women's Day will be organized by the Department of Public Information, in collaboration with the Division for the Advancement of Women. The event, scheduled to take place on 5 March from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (time to be confirmed), will be open to representatives of non-governmental organizations, members of delegations, the press and members of the Secretariat. Details will be announced in the *Journal*.

p.m.*	*Item 3 (c)*	Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern: violence against women
		Panel of experts: presentation and dialogue

Friday, 6 March

a.m.*	*Item 3*	Informal consultations
p.m.*	*Item 3*	Informal consultations

Week of 9-13 March

Monday, 9 March

a.m.*	*Item 3*	Informal consultations
p.m.*	*Item 3*	Informal consultations
6 p.m.		*Deadline for submission of draft proposals on items 3 and 5*

Tuesday, 10 March

a.m.*	*Item 3*	Informal consultations
p.m.*	*Item 3*	Informal consultations

Wednesday, 11 March

a.m.*	*Item 4*	Closed meeting of the Commission to consider the report of the Working Group on Communications, followed by:
	Item 3	Conclusion of general discussion
p.m.*	*Item 3*	Informal consultations

Thursday, 12 March

a.m.*	*Item 3*	Informal consultations
p.m.*	*Items 3 and 5*	Introduction of draft proposals, followed by:
p.m.*		Informal consultations on all outstanding issues, if necessary

Friday, 13 March

a.m. and p.m.		Report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Elaboration of a Draft Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
		Action on draft proposals and on the proposed agreed conclusions on item 3 (c)
p.m.	*Item 6*	Provisional agenda for the forty-third session of the Commission
	Item 7	Adoption of the report of the Commission on its forty-second session
		Closure of the session

* The meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Elaboration of a Draft Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women will be held simultaneously with the plenary meetings.

Annex II

Membership of the Commission on the Status of Women in 1998

(45 members; four-year term)

Membership	*Term expires on 31 December*
Angola	1998
Belgium	1998
Bolivia	2001
Brazil	1999
Bulgaria	1998
Chile	1999
China	1999
Congo	1998
Côte d'Ivoire	2001
Cuba	2001
Dominican Republic	1999
Ethiopia	2000
France	2000
Germany	2000
Ghana	2000
Greece	1998
India	2001
Indonesia	1998
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	2001
Japan	2000
Lebanon	1999
Lesotho	2001
Malaysia	2001
Mali	1999
Mexico	1998
Morocco	2000
Norway	1999
Paraguay	2000
Peru	2000
Philippines	1998
Poland	2000

Membership	*Term expires on 31 December*
Portugal	1998
Republic of Korea	2001
Russian Federation	1998
Rwanda	2001
Saint Lucia	2001
Slovakia	1999
Sri Lanka	2001
Sudan	2001
Swaziland	1999
Thailand	2000
Togo	1998
Uganda	2001
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	2000
United States of America	1999